

MAJOR ENDOCRINE DISORDERS. By S. Leonard Simpson. (Pp. 459; figs. 55. 50s.) London: Oxford University Press, 1959.

THERE is now almost a plethora of good text books on endocrine diseases, and each new edition of a book on this subject must be judged largely by how well it has kept abreast of the rapid current developments. By these standards the third edition of Dr. Simpson's text on endocrine disorders is excellent. In a remarkably concise manner Dr. Simpson and his colleagues, Drs. Stuart Mason and Swyer, present the essentials of the recent advances in the chemistry and physiology of these glands and at the same time retain a practical approach to the problems of diagnosis and treatment. For the practising clinician and the post-graduate who wishes to obtain a reliable review of this field the book is ideal. One may question whether it is too advanced for the undergraduate, but in the trend towards the use of good monographs on the various sections of medicine rather than a general text book then this is probably the book of choice for endocrinology. An excellent feature of the book is a discernible unity of purpose by the three authors which is sometimes lost when a greater multiplicity of authors have contributed to a subject. This book is thoroughly recommended. Any criticisms such as the inadequate space given to diabetes mellitus and to the discussion of the differential diagnosis of hyperparathyroidism are largely carping in view of the otherwise very good standard.

J. A. W.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS IN HUMAN PHARMACOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS. Edited by D. R. Laurence, M.D. (Pp. xvii+253; illustrated. 45s.) London: Pergamon Press, 1959.

THIS book is an edited report of a symposium held in March, 1958, under the auspices of the British Pharmacological Society, the Physiological Society, the Royal Society of Medicine, the Biometric Society and the Nutrition Society.

It is the most interesting and thought-stimulating volume that I have reviewed in the last three years. It should be read by all who attempt to assess the value of therapy in hospital or general practice. Henry Beecher's chapter on his experiences in assessing the efficacy of analgesic drugs in man is the outstanding contribution in the first two divisions of the book on "Methods and Problems associated with the Evaluation of Drugs in Man." The third division of the book, "Newer Statistical Methods applicable to Human Pharmacology and Therapeutics," is hard going for those of us who find it hard enough to understand the older statistical methods, but many research workers will be grateful, I think, for a clear account of the use of randomised blocks, for a classic example of the use of Latin square and for a concise account of the use of sequential analysis. The fourth division of the book on "The Introduction of Drugs into Clinical Practice and Clinical Trials" should be read and pondered by all doctors and all medical students. It deals with a topic that is going to be the major problem of the second half of the twentieth century and it deals with a method—the control therapeutic trial—which has been the only major contribution to scientific method that has to date originated from clinicians, we, who in the past have borrowed and modified and used so many methods from our sister sciences of chemistry, physics, physiology, and pathology.

Would I be unpopular if I suggested that this is the ideal Christmas present for the doctor's bedside table? Strangely enough, I do not think that I would be. Doctors' wives please note.

O. L. W.

ENURESIS OR BED-WETTING. By F. Bicknell, D.M.(Oxon). (Pp. 104. 7s. 6d.) London: Heinemann Medical Books.

THIS excellent little book will appeal to medical students and doctors, but not to psychiatrists or urologists. The author is to be congratulated on his brevity, excellent references, and sound commonsense. He has provided us with a formidable list of drugs for treating this distressing complaint and one cannot help but wonder how many of the so-called "cures" were due to natural causes and not to drugs.

W. I. F.